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*Polit Pamph vol 140.*

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A D D R E S S  
T O T H E  
P E O P L E  
O F  
G R E A T B R I T A I N.

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*De summâ salute vestrâ, de vestris conjugibus ac Liberis,  
de aris ac focus, de fanis ac templis, de imperio, de  
libertate, de salute patriæ, deque universâ republicâ  
decernite diligenter ac fortiter. CICERO.*

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ADDRESSES

TO THE

OFFICE OF THE

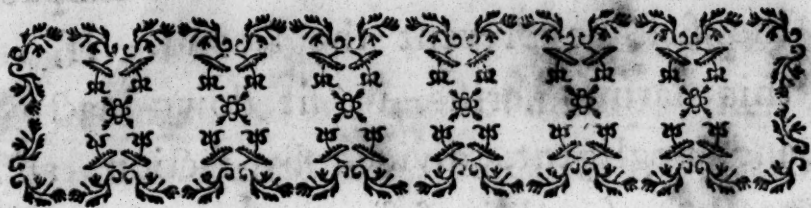


LONDON

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1841





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## A D D R E S S , &amp;c.

**I**N the present situation of public affairs, it is the interest, as well as duty of every Briton, to exert his talents, and to employ, to the utmost, his abilities, in the service of his country. A combination of powerful enemies threatens the state from without; and a rebellion, as unprovoked in its origin, as it has been extensive and ruinous in its progress, rages within our dominions. The dangers existing, as well as those in prospect, are so great, that nothing but the united

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force

force of hands and hearts, can dissipate the first or prevent the second. If, in this alarming crisis, we sit down inactive and negligent, divided by faction, and careless of public safety, we neither deserve to enjoy, nor can possibly secure those great and singular political advantages, which *ennoble*, as it were, this happy constitution, beyond any other, on the face of the earth.

The love of one's country, which glows in every generous breast, is a passion as laudable in itself, as it is beneficial in its consequences. Is there any subject, in the British isles, so blind to his own interest, so abject in his nature, so depraved by his passions, as to disregard those invaluable blessings, whose foundation our ancestors have laid in their own blood? Is there any one, whose affection for our excellent constitution, does not increase, in proportion to its danger? Is there any man possessed of common  
prudence,



prudence, or warmed with a sense of honour, who is not ready to stand forth the champion of his native country, when she is threatened with nothing less than a deprivation of her independence, as a great and free state?

Every generous, every honest, every virtuous mind will, I trust, give the proper answer to these queries. Warmed with sentiments, which I am neither ashamed to avow, nor afraid to support, I will use the freedom to say a few words to my countrymen. As the interests of all are concerned, my exhortations shall be directed to all. But, as motives may be different, though the object is the same, I shall address myself separately to the Gentlemen and Commonalty, those two orders into which the people are usually divided.

The property which you, GENTLEMEN, possess in the kingdom, has connected

nected your private interest, in a peculiar manner, with the public prosperity. The arms which the enemy raises against your country, are pointed at *your* breasts; and *she* cannot fall without involving *you* in her ruin. As your fate rests on her independence, so the existence of that independence can only be secured by your exertions. The rank you hold, the wealth you possess, the esteem due to your own characters, the respect paid to the memory of your forefathers, have turned the eyes of the lower classes of mankind to your conduct. They look up to you as their only guides in political matters; and the influence of your example is the standard, by which they measure the duty which they owe to the State. You are, therefore, pledged to your country, not only for yourselves, but for the inferior ranks of the people; as the populace of every nation always act, under the impressions given to their minds, by their leaders.

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To you, GENTLEMEN, it will be unnecessary to expatiate upon those motives which should direct your actions on the present occasion. The advantages of our constitution, in church and state, you have all experienced. The disadvantages of the political and religious systems of other countries, most of you have seen with your own eyes, or have learnt from your reading. As no comparison can exist between the civil regulations of Great Britain, and those of her enemies, so no argument is necessary to animate you, in the support of the former against the establishment of the latter. Liberty and slavery are placed in such distant and opposite extremes, that no middle course can be taken with any safety between them; and he that will not fight, and even die, rather than part with the first, scarce deserves a wretched existence under the second. The line of prudence has, at the present crisis, blended itself with the line of honour. The interested pas-

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sions hold the same course with those noble and dignified feelings of mind, which are more requisite in forming genuine gentlemen, than the gifts of fortune.

In former times, when perils threatened the kingdom, it was vain, perhaps, to hope for unanimity of sentiment, or union of exertion. The prejudices of education, a predilection for old forms, and a species of gratitude for favours received by their families, had rendered several GENTLEMEN attached to an exiled race of princes. War and invasion lost their terrors to those who connected the completion of their own wishes with the success of the enemy. But what passion of interest, what prejudice of mind, what blind principle of policy, can be gratified by any superiority to be gained at present by foreign arms? The superannuated claims of the dethroned family have long since expired; and they themselves, just arrived on the brink of extinction, have the



the mortification to find that they are no longer thought worthy of being even made the tools of France and Spain.

If old principles have lost that force which created disunion in times of danger, so no new prejudices ought to acquire strength sufficient to frustrate or defeat those exertions which every individual owes to the public in the present emergency. A disappointment in the line of ambition, a failure in the prospect of profit, can never outweigh that inherent and ardent affection which generous minds cherish for their country. A man of prudence will not sacrifice the state to the resentment he may have entertained against a minister. A man of honour will expel from his breast that pitiful, yet destructive, revenge, which cannot wound his political enemy but through the sides of the constitution. Speculative disputes in parliament, contentions for places of emolu-

ment or dignity, have, in every age, engaged the feelings and inflamed the minds of men. But when our general Parent calls to all her children, in her distresses, the selfish passions must shrink at her voice, and give room to those elevated sentiments, which a true love of our country never fails to inspire.

Nations and empires, like the fortunes of individuals, have been always subject to vicissitudes and changes. But what has been frequently ascribed to a natural inconstancy in human affairs, may too often be laid to the account of national negligence. That listless inactivity, and that criminal selfishness, which are the constant companions of public prosperity, not only prevent men from preparing against adversity, but render them incapable of bearing it with becoming fortitude, when it comes. Those who depress the minds of the people with dire forebodings of future disasters, are as much  
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the enemies of their country, as those who tie up her hands from motives of faction. You, Gentlemen, have it in your power to provide against the mischiefs springing from both, by stigmatizing the former with contempt, and the latter with infamy. The coward and the traitor are characters which ought to be expelled from your society, as unworthy of the company of Gentlemen. Your branding them with infamy will have more weight in terrifying or reclaiming them, than all the exertions of justice and punishments inflicted by the laws.

But though the present alarms are magnified by the fears of the timid, and the wickedness of the factious, they certainly exist, in a degree that should occupy your whole attention, and call forth all your exertions. The danger, though not insurmountable, is too great to be despised. The coasts of our enemies are crowded with armies; and our own are  
threatened

threatened with numerous and powerful fleets of ships of war. A reverse of fortune seems to impend over the kingdom; and the disorders of war, invasion, and bloodshed, if not prevented by the unanimity and spirit of this great nation, are near. Our constitution may be ruined; our national religion be changed into pageantry, superstition, and pious frauds. Our enemies seem determined not only to humble, but to extinguish our power; and the language of their presumption and vanity even extends to absolute conquest.

Can you, GENTLEMEN, hear such things without indignation? Can you perceive the approach of the storm, and not endeavour to prevent it from falling? This is the time for public spirit, this the hour for public exertion. Convince the world that your love for your country is an active principle, not a cold and speculative virtue; that it has an influence  
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on your minds, and animates your actions. When our country is in danger, what hand can refuse to draw the sword for her defence, or to open the purse for her support? With the independence of the state, every thing that is dear to an independent mind expires. Will you, —can you, who have always been free, submit to the tyranny of slaves? Shall men nursed in the bosom of liberty, kiss the rod of oppression? Has the spirit transmitted by our ancestors degenerated? Has their blood become cold in our veins? Are we fallen “into those dregs of times,” that we dare not assert the cause of justice and our country, and join in the defence of its independence, its religion, and its laws?

No, Gentlemen, I have no fears upon that head. The example of your ancestors, that gallant race, who chastised foreign enemies, and secured domestic freedom, is before you; and directs you,  
like

like a beacon, through the course, which interest and honour bid you to pursue. Let not the noble legacy of national dignity, independence, and liberty, which they left you, be wrested from your hands by the slaves of despotism and arbitrary power. Let the fire which kindled their bosoms, in the pursuit of national blessings, still burn in your breasts, to preserve those blessings to yourselves and to your country. Let not posterity owe less to you, than you have been indebted to your forefathers. Transmit to your children the sacred trust, which your ancestors placed in your hands. You have only the right of enjoying during your own lives, that noble estate of freedom which has descended to you from your predecessors. You have no right to alienate it, no pretence to permit it to be forced from your hands. Your children demand what your fathers left; and you are obliged by every tie which binds the brave, the generous, the honourable,

to



to satisfy their claim, in its utmost extent.

Place, GENTLEMEN, before your eyes the advantage, the honour of exhibiting a proper spirit upon this occasion. Reflect upon the misfortune and disgrace which must attend a listless inactivity in this time of public peril. Consider that the fate of this kingdom is, at this moment, in your hands. Should the constitution be overthrown, neither you nor your families can stand. A new race will arise in your place. Aliens will possess your fortunes, divide your estates, and riot on your wealth. He that retains a wretched existence in such a case, only reserves it as a prey to infamy and remorse. Disgrace will attend the timid throughout life. Reproach will for ever sit brooding upon the tombs of those who betray, because they aid not, their country, in her distress. Their very enemies will abhor such pusillanimous wretches,

as give an easy conquest to their arms. All good men will detest and shun them, the bad will deride them; and generations yet unborn will curse them to the latest posterity.

Is it possible, Gentlemen, that you will tamely suffer your country to be insulted, invaded, and, perhaps, conquered by an enemy, who has always, and that very lately, trembled at your arms? Shades of our illustrious ancestors, turn not away, with indignation, from your degenerate race! Did you for this, ye Edwards and ye Henries, conquer at Poitiers and Cressy, and stain the plains of Agincourt, with the best blood of France? Is all the glory, bought with so much valour and toil, in the fields of Blenheim, Oudenard, and Malplaquet forgotten? Where now are the laurels, acquired, in every quarter of the world, in the last successful war? Are the sons of those, who defeated and  
ruined



ruined the formidable Armada, to be insulted with impunity, by the navy of France and Spain? Are those very men, who destroyed the fleet of Conflans, in 1759, to give up, in 1779, the palm of victory to the Count d'Orvilliers. No, GENTLEMEN, the thing is impossible. I think I see indignation flashing from your eyes, at even the supposition of such disgrace! Exert then your power, your influence, your talents, vie with one another, in the honourable contest, who shall do most for his country in her distress. Let public danger extinguish the unworthy flame of private animosity. Let quarrels between individuals give way to resentment against the common enemy. Let every man, who wishes to revenge himself on his political enemy, endeavour to do it, by eclipsing the reputation of those whom he hates, by the superiority of his own zeal for his country.

Permit me, my countrymen of the lower class, to direct to you the concluding part of this address. The arguments already used ought to stimulate you to the duties, which you owe to your country. The calamities, which may fall upon the nation, will involve you, as well as those of superior stations. A decay of commerce, a scarcity of the necessaries, as well as of the comforts of life, would certainly follow the fall of the constitution. The gloomy tyranny, which has spread distress and poverty over your neighbours on the continent, would be extended inevitably to you, by a conquest. Your time, your service, and your persons would become the property of the victors. They would make you "hewers of wood, and drawers of water;" the mere slaves of their insolence and pleasure. Those French manners, which you now ridicule and despise, would be forced upon you; and the old, manly, British customs, would



would be not only checked, but annihilated.

You are the Commons of Great Britain ; and an essential part of its constitution. You sit, by your representatives, in parliament. You tax yourselves ; you have a share in making those laws, by which you are governed. You are, by an hereditary right, your own masters. There is not one among you, but may raise himself by industry, by honesty, by valour, to a conspicuous rank, among his countrymen. Will you, therefore, sit still, and permit our constitution to be ruined ; our British acts of parliament to give way to *French* edicts ; and yourselves to exchange the rights of domestic freedom, for the fetters of foreign slavery ?

No, my countrymen, we must not think so unworthily of the commons of England. Your ancestors dared to be free;

free; and you, I trust, dare *not* to permit yourselves to be made slaves. You know your enemies. You have often met them, by sea and land; and met them; only to make them fly. Are those; whom you have often subdued, become, all on a sudden, invincible? Is it not more probable, that it is their national presumption and not their natural courage, urges them on, in the present emergency? Shew yourselves, therefore, what you have always been; and they will recollect their former conquerors. Assert the cause of liberty and of your country, for it is your own cause. Cherish harmony, encourage unanimity, despise the insinuations of the timid; be not disturbed at the suggestions of party. All opposition from your enemies will vanish before your courage. The fears of the people will be soon dissipated; and our national glory will rise in proportion to our present depression.



